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25 MAR 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

FROM : Inspector General

SUBJECT : Mail Survey

APPROVED FOR RELEASE DATE: 05-Nov-2008

1. We have reviewed your statement of 13 January 1975 to the Commission on CIA Activities within the United States and the one of 15 January 1975 to the Senate Appropriations Committee, and in both instances the last sentence dealing with subject states that "there has been no mail survey in this country by CIA since February 1973." An article in the Washington Post of 18 March 1975 called attention to this statement in connection with statistics released by the U.S. Postal Service that showed that "the Central Intelligence Agency had two mail covers in 1973."

2.

3. In the second instance, the Office of Security requested mail cover on and on The mail cover was established on 20 June 1972 and renewed at 90 and 60 day intervals. The last renewal occurred on 26 December 1972 and expired on 29 May 1973.

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SUBJECT: Mail Survey

4. Relevant statements made by you and comments by the press are attached.

Donald F. Chamberlain
Inspector General

Statement by the DCI to the Commission on
CIA Activities Within the United States
13 January 1975

From 1953 until February 1973, CIA conducted several programs to survey and open selected mail between the United States and two Communist countries. One occurred in a US city from 1953 to February 1973, when it was terminated. One took place during limited periods in one other area in November 1969, February and May 1970, and October 1971. One other occurred in August 1957. The purpose of the first and extended activity was to identify individuals in active correspondence with Communist countries for presumed counterintelligence purposes, the results being shared with the FBI. The others were designed primarily to determine the nature and extent of censorship techniques. The August 1957 case was to try to learn the foreign contacts of a number of Americans of counter-intelligence interest. I repeat that there has been no mail survey in this country by CIA since February 1973.

Statement by the DCI before the Senate
Appropriations Committee
15 January 1975

This was a verbatim statement to the one you made on 13 January. However, a supplement to this statement included the following revision:

Delete the remainder of the text beginning with sentence One other occurred in August 1957 and substitute the following:

(One) of a limited nature took place in 1954. The primary purpose of these activities was to identify individuals in active correspondence with Communist countries for counter-intelligence purposes, the results being shared with the FBI. They also were designed to determine the nature and extent of foreign governments' censorship techniques and to give leads to persons (foreign and American, in the United States and the countries of interest) who would be interested in cooperating with CIA in foreign intelligence operations. In addition to the above, international mail passing through a U.S. port was opened in August 1957. There has been no mail survey in this country by CIA since February 1973.

Newspaper Comments

An article in the Washington Post of 18 March 1975 reported that statistics from the U.S. Postal Service showed "that the Central Intelligence Agency had two mail covers in 1973. The CIA has said it stopped its program of surveying and opening mail between this country and foreign countries in February 1973."

An article in the Washington Post of 19 March 1975 deals with testimony by Mr. William J. Cotter, Chief Postal Inspector, to a Congressional subcommittee and contains the sentence "With the exception of activities publicly admitted to by the CIA, Cotter said, no mail is opened without a court order.